

ABC NIGHTLINE

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KOPPEL: The White House had no comment. The CIA had no comment, and the State Department went only a hair further. 'We don't comment on intelligence activities,' said state, 'but as a matter of policy, it is not the policy of the government of the United States to overthrow the government of Suriname.' That was all in response to a report by Carl Bernstein on this broadcast last night. In that report Bernstein quoted congressional sources as claiming that CIA Director William Casey told the House and Senate Intelligence Committees last December of a covert CIA plan to overthrow the government of Suriname. In the face of heated congressional opposition, the plan was reportedly dropped. Today the New York Times reported that its independent sources had confirmed that story and Bernstein reports that other congressional sources have now also confirmed it. A little later in this broadcast we will talk with Henry Kissinger, Richard Allen and Stansfield Turner about the pros and cons of covert activity. But first, Fred Marte, a leader of the Council for the Liberation of Suriname. Mr. Marte, the conditions in your country—you claim they are even worse than we have heard. How bad are they? MARTE: Well, Ted, they are very bad because to look at the Suriname situation, one should view them on two levels. The first is the level of the national unit in which we have to do, we are confronted with armed bands in a fragmented state which are terrorizing the majority of the people of Suriname. Now, 99% of the Suriname people are against these armed bands, and it is a matter of fact that conditions are far worse, worse than we've, you've heard here.

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KOPPEL: Had you heard, let me just ask you first of all whether you had heard, and I mean has the CIA for example, been in touch with you or any of your colleagues, about providing assistance? MARTE: No, we don't, we know nothing whatsoever about CIA and CIA contacts. We are trying to liberate Suriname from (inaudible) in fact criminals, and we are determined to do that, and we have embarked on this course.

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